

**DATE:** September 8, 2022

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**NAME AND TITLE:** Walter Babicz, City Manager

**SUBJECT:** 1st Avenue Integrated Health and Housing Project –Update

**ATTACHMENT(S):** None

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated September 8, 2022, from the City Manager titled “1<sup>st</sup> Avenue Integrated Health and Housing Update”.

**PURPOSE:**

BC Housing is continuing to collaborate with the City of Prince George and Northern Health on one of the most significant and innovative housing projects in British Columbia. Together, the partners are adding affordable housing integrated with healthcare services to serve Prince George’s most vulnerable populations and improve the community, particularly the city’s downtown area. This report provides a brief update on project progress and highlights a recent funding confirmation.

**BACKGROUND:**

The initiative, separated into three stages, will provide up to 150 new affordable homes at 808/855 First Avenue (NR Motor’s previous location) with support and services. The first project, featuring 50 safe and secure homes for people experiencing homelessness in Prince George, opened in June of 2022. Connective operates the building and provides residents with on-site staff and support services including meal programs, life and employment skills training, health and wellness supports, and opportunities for volunteer work.

In late August of 2022, BC Housing advised that a funding allocation had been approved to advance the second stage of development that will consist of 50 units of supported housing and a health centre. Funding will enable engagement of an architect to advance the design of the centre and procurement of a Construction Manager. To address recommendations in the 2017 Downtown Prince George Health Services Review, Northern Health, in partnership with other health service agencies, will provide primary care, harm reduction, as well as specialized mental health and substance-use services in the health care space.

BC Housing continues to highlight the partners’ request for funding to complete the third and final project stage, featuring 50 units of affordable rental housing for Indigenous individuals and an additional 10,000 square feet of health care space.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Council has identified the need to “advocate for housing and health services to serve the diversity of need amongst residents” as one of its priorities. The 2022/23 Corporate Work Plan includes the facilitation of the City’s role in advancing the 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue health and housing project as a key strategy.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

BC Housing is continuing to collaborate with the City of Prince George and Northern Health on one of the most significant and innovative housing projects in British Columbia. The initiative, separated into three stages, will provide up to 150 new affordable homes at 808/855 First Avenue (NR Motor’s previous location) with support and services. The first project, featuring 50 safe and secure homes for people experiencing homelessness in Prince George opened in June 2022. In late August of 2022, BC Housing advised that a funding allocation had been approved to advance the second stage of development that will consist of 50 units of supported housing and a health centre. The City continues to advocate for the third and final project stage.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Walter Babicz, City Manager

**PREPARED BY:** Chris Bone, Sr. Manager – Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships

Meeting Date: 2022/09/21